

**Response**

Applicant: G. Stephen LeGraw

Serial No.: 09/754,492

Filed: January 4, 2001

Docket No.: S144.101.102

Title: COMMERCIAL COMPANY INFORMATION TRADING SYSTEM AND METHOD

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**IN THE CLAIMS**

1-60. (Cancelled)

61. (Previously Presented) A computerized method for trading information related to commercial companies via a network, comprising the steps of:

collecting private company information from a user at a first location, the private company information having a confidential data portion, which includes confidential identifying information for a private company that corresponds with the private company information, and an exchange data portion, which is characterized by an absence of confidential identifying information for the private company;

transmitting only the exchange data portion to a central location via the network;

defining an exchange data set at the central location;

updating the exchange data set using the exchange data portion; and

determining an output data set from the exchange data set;

transmitting the output data set from the central location to the user at the first location via the network;

wherein the private company is part of a commercial industry, and the output data set includes statistical averages for the commercial industry.

62. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 61, wherein the step of transmitting only the exchange data portion to a central location includes the step of transmitting only the exchange data portion to a central location via a network.

63. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 62, wherein the network includes an Internet communication link.

64. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 61, further comprising the steps of:

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defining one or more groups; and

determining one or more groups associated with the collected information.

65. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 64, further comprising the step of attaching the determined groups to the exchange data portion.

66. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 61, further comprising the step of defining the user as a qualified user.

67. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 66, further comprising the step of defining the exchange data set as a qualified user exchange data set.

68. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 61, wherein transmitting the output data set from the central location to user at the first location is performed via an Internet communication link.

69. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 61, further comprising storing the output data set at the first location.

70. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 61, further comprising storing the output data set at the central location.

71. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 61, further comprising the step of storing the collected information at the first location.

72. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 61, further comprising the step of storing the confidential data portion at the first location.

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73. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 61, wherein the step of determining the output data set further comprises the steps of:
- defining a statistical model;
  - generating a statistical data set using the exchange data set and the statistical model; and
  - storing the statistical data set as the output data set.
74. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 73, further comprising the step of receiving a second exchange data portion from a second user; updating the exchange data set using the second exchange data portion; and transmitting the output data set to the second user.
75. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 61, wherein the step of collecting information from a user further includes the steps of:
- defining a graphical user interface including a webpage; and
  - collecting information from the user via the webpage.
76. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 75, further comprising the steps of:
- accessing the central controller via the webpage using a login routine, wherein the login routine determines whether a user is allowed to access the central controller.
77. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 76, wherein transmitting the output data set to the user is performed at the completion of the login routine.
78. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 61, further comprising the step of generating a graph from the output data set.
79. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 61, wherein the step of collecting information from a user includes the step of collecting benchmark information.

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80. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 79, wherein the benchmarking information is asset information.

81. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 80, wherein the asset information includes public business valuation information.

82. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 80, wherein the asset information includes private business valuation information.

83. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 80, wherein the asset data information includes portfolio information.

84. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 80, wherein the asset information includes capital structure information.

85. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 80, wherein the benchmarking information is performance information.

86. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 61, further comprising the step of collecting public company commercial information from a published public exchange market.

87. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 61, wherein the statistical averages include at least one of average deal statistics, average valuation statistics, average collateral statistics, average operating performance statistics, and average operating performance data.

88. (Previously Presented) A network business method for providing commercial statistical data via a network, comprising the steps of:

collecting commercial data information via a webpage from a user, wherein the commercial data information relates to a private company in an industry;

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generating a commercial data record from the commercial data information, including a confidential subrecord that identifies the private company and an exchange subrecord; defining a commercial statistical analysis system having an exchange data set; transmitting only the exchange subrecord via a network communication link to the commercial statistical analysis system;

updating the exchange data set using the exchange subrecord;

generating a commercial statistical data set for the industry using the commercial statistical analysis system, wherein the commercial statistical data set includes statistical averages for the industry; and

transmitting the commercial statistical data set to the user;

wherein the commercial statistical data set is configured to protect an identity of the private company from other users with access to the commercial statistical data set.

89. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 88, wherein transmitting the commercial statistical data set from the commercial statistical analysis system to the user is completed via the network communication link.

90. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 89, further comprising storing the commercial statistical data set.

91. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 90, further comprising storing the commercial statistical data set at the commercial statistical analysis system.

92. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 88, further comprising the step of storing the collected information at the location of the user.

93. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 88, further comprising the step of storing the confidential subrecord at the location of the user.

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94. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 88, wherein the step of generating the commercial statistical data set further comprises the steps of:  
defining a statistical model; and  
generating a commercial statistical data set using the exchange data set and the statistical model.
95. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 94, further comprising the step of receiving a second exchange subrecord from a second user; and updating the exchange data set using the second exchange subrecord.
96. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 88, further comprising the steps of:  
accessing the commercial statistical analysis system via the web page using a login routine, wherein the login routine determines whether a user is allowed to access the commercial statistical analysis system.
97. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 96, wherein transmitting the commercial statistical data set to the user is performed at the completion of the login routine.
98. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 88, further comprising the step of generating a graph from the commercial statistical data set.
99. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 88, wherein the step of collecting information from a user includes the step of collecting asset information.
100. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 99, wherein the asset information includes public business valuation and other statistical information.
101. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 99, wherein the asset information includes private business valuation and other statistical information.

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102. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 88, further comprising the step of determining whether the user is a qualified user.

103. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 102, further comprising the step of defining a qualified user exchange data set, wherein the qualified user exchange data set is allowed to be accessed only by the qualified user.

104. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 103, further comprising the step of defining the exchange data set to include the qualified user exchange data set as a subset of the exchange data set.

105. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 88, comprising the step of defining the network communication link to include an internet communication link.

106. (Previously Presented) A system for trading commercial information via a network, the system comprising:

a commercial information exchange system including an exchange system controller and an exchange data storage system;

wherein the commercial information exchange system is configured to receive an exchange subrecord from a user via the network, to update the exchange data set using the exchange subrecord, to generate a commercial statistical data set, and to transmit the commercial statistical data set to the user via the network, and further wherein the exchange subrecord includes commercial information relating to a private company in an industry, and the statistical data set includes statistical averages for the industry, and wherein the commercial statistical data set is defined by a lack of information identifying a source of the exchange subrecord.

107. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 106, wherein the user is a qualified user, and the commercial statistical data set is accessible only by one or more qualified users.

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108. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 106, further comprising:  
a first user interface located at a first location with the user;  
wherein the first user interface is in communication with the commercial information exchange system via the network, for transmitting the exchange record from the first user interface to the commercial information exchange system and for transmitting the commercial statistical data set to the first user from the commercial information exchange system.
109. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 106, wherein the network includes the Internet.
110. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 106, wherein the exchange system controller further includes a web server.
111. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 106, wherein the exchange system controller further includes a query manager for managing queries between the user and the commercial information exchange system.
112. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 106, wherein the exchange system controller includes a statistical model, wherein the commercial statistical data set is generated using the exchange data set and the statistical model.
113. (Previously Presented) A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing a method for providing commercial statistical data via a network comprising:  
collecting commercial data information via a webpage from a user, the commercial data information being associated with a private company in an industry;  
generating a commercial data record from the commercial data information, including a confidential subrecord that identifies the private company and an exchange subrecord;



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defining a commercial statistical analysis system having an exchange data set;  
transmitting only the exchange subrecord via a network communication link to the commercial statistical analysis system;  
updating the exchange data set using the exchange subrecord;  
generating a commercial statistical data set using the commercial statistical analysis system, wherein the commercial statistical data set includes statistical averages for the industry;  
and  
transmitting the commercial statistical data set from the commercial statistical analysis system to the user;  
wherein the commercial statistical data set is configured to protect an identity of the private company from other users with access to the commercial statistical data set.

114. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 113, wherein transmitting the commercial statistical data set from the commercial statistical analysis system to the user is performed via the network communication link.

115. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 113, wherein the step of generating the commercial statistical data set further comprises:  
defining a statistical model; and  
generating a commercial statistical data set using the exchange data set and a statistical model.

116. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 113, further comprising the step of receiving a second exchange subrecord from a second user; and updating the exchange data set using the second exchange subrecord.

117. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 113, further comprising the step of:  
accessing the commercial statistical analysis system via the webpage using a login

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routine, wherein the login routine determines whether a user is allowed to access the commercial statistical analysis system.

118. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 117, wherein transmitting the commercial statistical data set to the user is performed at the completion of the login routine.

119. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 113, wherein the step of collecting information from a user includes the step of collecting private business valuation information.

120. (Previously Presented) A method for trading private company statistical data comprising:

- collecting private company data information including business valuation and other statistical data via a webpage from a user associated with the private company, wherein the private company is part of a commercial industry;

- generating a private company data record from the private company data information, including a confidential subrecord, which includes confidential identifying information for the private company, and an exchange subrecord, which is defined by an absence of confidential identifying information for the private company;

- storing the confidential subrecord at the location of the user;

- defining a statistical analysis system having an exchange data set and at least one statistical model;

- transmitting only the exchange subrecord to the statistical analysis system;

- updating the exchange data set using the exchange subrecord;

- storing the updated exchange data set to the statistical analysis system;

- generating a private company statistical data set using the statistical analysis system based upon the updated exchange data set and the at least one statistical model, wherein the private company statistical data set includes statistical averages for the commercial industry, the statistical averages including at least one of average deal statistics, average valuation statistics,

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average collateral statistics, average operating performance statistics, and average operating performance data; and

transmitting the private company statistical data set to one or more qualified users, wherein a qualified user is defined as a user who provides exchange subrecords to the statistical analysis system, and wherein the commercial statistical data set is configured to protect an identity of the private company from other users with access to the commercial statistical data set.